Wilson Bull., 102(2), 1990, pp. 354–365

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

LIFETIME REPRODUCTION IN BIRDS. Edited by Ian Newton. Academic Press, London, England. 1989. 479 pp. (price not known).—One of the most important developments in ornithology over the past 20 years has been the establishment of long-term studies of individual, marked birds. From such studies one can track the reproductive contribution of individuals. Lifetime reproductive success (LRS) is defined as "the total number of young raised by recognizable individuals during their lifespans," and is the theme of this book.

The volume is composed of 26 chapters contributed by more than 30 authors from many countries. Each chapter generally consists of a detailed synthesis of information accumulated during many years of study of single species. As a result, the account is very rich and extremely uneven. Chapters deal with "short-lived hole nesters" (e.g., tits [*Parus*] and other species), "short-lived open nesters," (e.g., Red-winged Blackbird [*Agelaius phoeniceus*], Indigo Bunting [*Passerina cyanea*]), "cooperative breeders," (including the Florida Scrub Jay [*Aphelocoma caerulescens*]), "birds of prey," (e.g., Osprey [*Pandion haliaetus*], Eastern Screech-Owl [*Otus asio*]), and "long-lived waterfowl and seabirds," (e.g., Barnacle Goose [*Branta leucopsis*], Short-tailed Shearwater [*Puffinus tenuirostris*]). "General issues" are discussed in two synthesis chapters.

Most chapters end with "conclusions" sections that summarize the major factors that lead to increased LRS. If all authors had followed this format, the book could be a bit more useful and editors of future syntheses would do well to insist on such conformity. In many species, lifespan was identified as the major contributor to LRS. In a few cases, environmental factors were more important. At any rate, researchers considering how to begin a long-term study will benefit from the variety of approaches used by the authors of the present volume. Obviously, techniques used to study small cavity-nesting species are not directly applicable to seabirds, but the diversity of approach here is instructive.

The book is bound in a glossy, colorful cover and appears to be highly durable. The papers are well edited and relatively free of error. However, variation in the style of figure preparation makes the chapters look more like separate scientific papers in a journal. There is a bit of confusion in the literature cited sections about whether doctoral students produce theses or dissertations. (Why cite dissertations as "unpublished?" We should be able to recognize that they are by their very nature special sorts of publications which still exist even when some of the information in them appears elsewhere.) My major complaint (and it is not so big a complaint at that) is that the editor or typesetter has changed conventional American spelling to that favored by the British (color = colour; behavior = behaviour, and the like), even in titles where the original used the former. The most egregious case occurs when Tree Swallow (*Tachycineta* [*Iridoprocne*] *bicolor*) is given as *I. bicolour*!

Perhaps the most interesting contribution of the present book is its documentation of the observation that only a few birds survive to produce young and those that do reproduce vary widely in their contributions. Individual chapters differ in their presentations of the evidence, as do the specific interests of the authors. The editor says that the aim of the book is "to bring together most of the major avian studies of lifetime reproduction. . . and find what general patterns emerge." It appears that the volume is successful in fulfilling this goal.—CHARLES R. BLEM.

WORLD BIRDBASE: THE WORLD BIRDER'S DATABASE. Santa Barbara Software Products, 1400 Dover Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93103, USA. 1988:5.25" (or 3.5") floppy disks, 76 pp. manual. U.S. $99.00 + $5.00 shipping ($10.00 for foreign sales).—The tremendous expansion in interest in birding over the past two decades has been paralleled by the pro-